



State Capitol | Lansing, Michigan 48913

PH (517) 373.7670 | FAX (517) 373.5958

www.senate.michigan.gov/gop/senator/sanborn/

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Contact: Peter Langley

517-373-7670

Can a Collective Bargaining Agreement Force Someone to Care? Senator Alan Sanborn Says No.

LANSING — The Senate today approved a package of bills that will block costly new rules on adult care facilities, ensuring Michigan families have a broad range of care options at a reasonable price, announced Sen. Alan Sanborn, R-Richmond Township.

Under regulations being considered by the Granholm administration, a group-home facility would have to maintain extensive paperwork on employees, hiring and compensation, or it could simply sign a collective bargaining agreement and be deemed in compliance. The legislation was introduced because vulnerable people shouldn't have less protection or state oversight simply because the employees at their facility are unionized.

"What they [the union lobbyists] fail to understand is that some people care for our elderly for reasons of the heart and not for reasons of the pocketbook," Sanborn said. "The compassion these dedicated employees show for our most vulnerable can not be negotiated into a collective bargaining agreement."

Industry analysts have estimated the additional cost to care providers to be at least \$35 million a year, which would be borne by Michigan families who depend on these facilities to care for their loved ones.

Almost 50,000 adults live in a state-licensed assisted-living facility, in Michigan, which has among the nation's most stringent regulations for adult foster care homes. Residents require special care because of developmental, psychiatric or physical disabilities.

Senate Bills 1026-1030 now head to the House of Representatives for consideration.

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Note: Audio and video comments from Sen. Sanborn during the debate on the Senate floor are available on the senator's Web site, www.senate.michigan.gov/gop/audiowire/sanborn.